

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

REBECCA JILLANNE BEARDMORE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS


IN

PRINTMAKING

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 2001



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Final Visual Presentation

submitted by REBECCA JILLANNE BEARDMORE partial

fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art.

The University of Alberta

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I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections, University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Collection:

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
Suspended Disbelief: Perceptions of space and realities III, V, VI Value: \$1,500.00	2001	Offset litho, silkscreen, blind emboss	28 x 35.5 cm
The Materiality of Truth: A universal language Value: \$3,000.00	2001	Offset litho on Zinc, silkscreen, blind emboss	28.35.5 cm
The Observatory Value: \$3,000.00	2001	Offset litho, silk-screen, sandblasted acrylic mirror, painted acrylic	88 x 124.5 cm

W H I S T L E

by

Rebecca Beardmore

under the supervision of Professor Walter Jule

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking

September 28, 2001

University of Alberta
Department of Art and Design
Edmonton, Alberta
CANADA

A Statement about the work:

The theoretical focus surrounding my visual art practice addresses issues of perception within a society engulfed in digitally emblazoned images and fabricated realities. My passion for printmaking fits well within the context of these concerns, the medium itself situated at the core of image culture. My desire was to create a body of work which will engage the viewer through the use of subtlety. This approach contrasts with the more established practice of visual assault. My work attempts to invite interaction, but deny satisfaction, creating anxiety and dissonance. The work incorporates the use of three languages: the informative/textual layer, the photographic image, and finally the material itself, each presented with such fragility that neither can be collectively discerned. In order to engage in one, another must be relinquished. The idea that any single layer can not be relied upon for total coherency highlights the uneasy balance that exists between experience and understanding; a fragile relationship in the body of knowledge currently being transformed by the pure possibility of *access*. The work fluctuates with the momentum of the audience it attempts to seduce, shifting between centres of awareness; the literal, the figurative and the physical. The viewer is forced to engage with a dialectic of appearance and disappearance, gain and loss. This dichotomy has become an ever increasing concern in this time of technological dominance, a time when mass mediated imagery asks little from us in regards to the deciphering of content. Digitally created realities demand very little personal engagement. In an attempt to *awaken* the viewer from this *blindness*, my work demands a form of exertion on the part of the viewer to try and distinguish the barely indistinguishable. In this regard the work is made to diagnose its own spectators, a diagnosis based on what is seen, how easily it is seen and whether or not the effort is made to see. An invitation or provocation?

Rebecca Beardmore
September, 2001

The Foundation:

'For many artists technology has been absent because it is both difficult to access and difficult to distil into an art practice. For artists to productively employ technology there has to be curiosity and concern about a relationship *with* technology itself.'*

We have entered an age now, more than ever before, where technology pervades every element of our existence. Immersed in an electronic environment, our perception, memory, history, identity and experience is mediated through mass consumption, which subsumes individual experience into one global operative principal. With anticipation like that of an amenable dog, we absorb every bit of information fed to us by means of television, radio, billboards, newspapers, journals, eagerly awaiting the next course. It seems odd the way we look on with uncertainty and suspicion at the thought of automated intelligence; machines and objects labelled *smart* for their efficiency and cost-effective ability to process information, when for years we have welcomed those same machines into our homes; *smart* refrigerators, *smart* phones, *smart* televisions, without ever questioning the possible underlying motive they conceal. After all, *smart* is not the same as intelligent. *Smart* is programmed intelligence, obedience, efficiency, user-friendly, and certainly not what we would associate with freethinking individuals. Then again.... sit in front of the box for an hour and perhaps those less than worthy attributes say more about human intellect than our mechanical surrogates.

"Creating a shift in the viewer's perspective and consciousness has been the focus of 20th Century art." My work is no exception. For the past three years I have, along side many other more prolific artists, addressed the concerns of information technology within a society caught up in its increasing momentum. With the dawn of a new decade, the digital realm continues to race forth with promise and possibility leaving artists and philosophers alike to examine the negative externalities of these technocentric pursuits and idealistic endeavours.

My exploration began through observations of a community embedded in an information culture; a culture which seeks its authorisation in technology, finds its satisfaction in technology and takes its orders from technology. Technologies are fuelled by information. One cannot dispute the fact that their invention and intended purpose has always been to serve society, to facilitate existence. However, technological development is now progressing at such a rate that we find ourselves in information saturation, where information is produced in enormous volumes with no person or objective in mind. This glut destabilises those institutions of control such as schools, laws, families, bureaucracies and political parties. Information is thus disconnected from meaning and purpose, which leads to cultural confusion rather than

* Gretchen Bender, "Memory and Forgetfulness", *Ten 8*, vol no 2, p 96

cohesion. Society's solution is to create new technologies to sort, store and distribute this information which in turn, produces even more information. Despite this, it seems we are driven to fill our lives with the quest to access more information at ever increasing speeds, assuming information technology to be the supreme instrument of human achievement. Our uncritical allegiance toward technology is the outcome of a culture that deprives us of any historical, social, spiritual and logical basis for knowing what is beyond belief. This blind faith has assumed the role of a new religion, falsely providing the promise of freedom, peace of mind and the solution to our most profound dilemmas. In this time of technological dominance, in a time where quantity of information is favoured over quality, the meaning of words such as freedom, truth, intelligence and memory are redefined. This technological intrusion changes the ideological foundations of society, creating a new concept of reality.

As artists, we cannot allow ourselves to become visually illiterate to this processed information and must consider that technology is a crucial part of the visual expansion of culture. Our task is to rethink the place of technology and recognise that the *dumbness* appointed to the declining standards of human worth, is an intentional effect of this mechanical hierarchy. As an artist with hands-on experience, I am both overwhelmed and cynical of the aesthetic and emotional potential of this new tool. There is at once this sense of personal empowerment and complete loss of self. Computers have a way of dampening ritual and feeling, amplifying isolation by becoming a substitute for physical contact.

As a means of highlighting these concerns my work incorporates the use of text, photography, various printmaking techniques and the manipulation of raw material (ie. aluminium and zinc plates, acrylic and aluminised Mylar). My aim is to provide context, emotion and insight to an audience positioned at the centre of two contradictory spheres: the humanistic and the technocratic. In the interest of creating a space that best projects the intent of my work, I have explored the area of print installation, bringing the printed surface into a physical dimension through the incorporation of 3-dimensional elements. My objective is to retain the viewer in an emotionally fragile position of uneasiness, suspending them between a moment of seduction and confrontation, while presenting a world teetering under information overload.

Rebecca Beardmore

Rebecca Beardmore

List of works:

1. ***In the Mirror***
Offset litho on acrylic, silkscreen
85.7x66 cm
2001
- 2-9. ***Suspended Disbelief: Perceptions of space and realities I – VIII***
Offset litho, silkscreen, blind emboss
28x35.5 cm (paper- 38x55.9 cm)
2001
10. ***The Shifting Point***
Silkscreened varnish on gallery wall
80x122 cm
2001
- 11-13. ***Virtualities: A dialectic of appearance and disappearance I, II, III***
Offset litho, woodblock relief, silkscreen, blind emboss, glass beads
25.4x31.75 cm (paper size variable)
2001
14. ***Return***
Offset litho on aluminium
68.6x94.6 cm
2001
15. ***Borrowed Scenery***
Silkscreen, semi-translucent mirror film, sandblasted acrylic
208x408 cm (x5 sheets)
2001
- 16-18. ***Interrogation (in three stages) I,II,III***
Offset litho on aluminium, silkscreen, blind emboss
74x122 cm (I), 80x122 cm (II), 75x122 cm (III)
2001
19. ***The Imagined Spectator***
Offset litho on acrylic, silkscreen, glass beads
371x122 cm; (panel widths vary from 78.7 – 89 cm each)
2001

20-29. ***The Materiality of Truth: A universal language***

Offset litho on zinc, silkscreen, blind emboss

28.35.5 cm each

2001

30. ***The Observatory***

Offset litho, silkscreen, sandblasted acrylic mirror, painted acrylic

88x124.5 cm each panel (west wall), 373.4x244 cm (east wall)

2001

Acknowledgments

I'm not exactly sure where to begin, the support in the pursuit of this degree has been immeasurable and come from a wide array of people both here and abroad.

To begin with, I must thank Lyndal Osborne for planting the initial seed long ago on one of her trips home to Australia. My mind drifts now to all the instructors who took enough interest in my work to offer their suggestions and input; here are just a few- apologies to those I have inexcusably forgotten in the writing of this letter: Liz Ingram, Lisa Murray, Marna Burnell, Tad Warszynski, Michelle Lavoie (and her beautiful depictions of water droplets on the indefinable surface of a window pane), Sean Caulfield, Dr. Jetske Sybesma and of course Walter Jule, who through much coercion pushed me beyond the torturous barriers of my ideas alone and into the actual physical act of art making. I actually finished a body of work!!! Thank you so much for those lengthy conversations that both expanded and refined my ideas and propelled me to continue even during moments of uncertainty and failure- and when all else proved futile, chocolate succeeded!

I also have to extend my gratitude to all the graduate students with whom I shared a studio with over the past three years: Nancy Fox, Helen Gerritzen, Sima Khorrami, Fumiko Goto, Fuki Hamada and more recently, Tomoyo Ihaya (Wasureta! Gomenasai Gomenasai Gomenasai!), Nick Smolinski, my neighbour Patrick Bulas (who endured endless chatter), my partner in crime Briana Palmer (together we form the pair of biggest time wasters around!), and of course Gareth Langley- we enter and exit together!! (congratulations). Thank you to all the aforementioned for creating a space that was intellectually stimulating, creatively diverse, and for allowing me the freedom to fulfil grand ideas (on a rather grand scale that extended beyond the boundaries of my studio space!).

And the list continues.... A VERY BIG thank you to two super technicians, Marc Seigner and Steve Dixon, who helped me to surpass the technical limitations of my rather unorthodox approaches to print making. You're both champions!

If they were here I would thank my Japanese family; Masako, Tahtan, Etsuko, Natsuko, Muki, Hio, and my friends abroad; Hidde, Yoshiko, Takashi, and more, who's influence will have left a mark deeper than I can now express. Domo Arigato Gozaimasu!

An extended thank you to all those beyond the print hemisphere; Sue Colberg, Louise Asselstine, Dave Roles, Ken Horne, Craig Leblanc, Tanya, Jen, Caitlin (a printmaker I know!!), Terry, this list seems endless!

I cannot forget to mention Maria Anna Parolin and Angus Wyatt, with whom weekends away in the mountains always proved to be creatively stimulating!

Before I forget, I should thank my parents, siblings and in-laws, whose support has been distant but ever present through all the impoverished years- and I know my mother worried throughout!

I must finish with the most important thank you of all (tears are now welling up in my eyes- what an emotional sop am I), to my husband Anton Beardmore. Without his unwavering support both emotionally (especially emotionally), and physically this show would not have been possible. He is my photographer, my installation designer, my builder, my biggest critic (after myself of course), my best friend and the love of my life. Thank you forever.

And for all those I've forgotten to mention- so sorry. I thank you all.

Bec

an uneasy

balance

MFA exhibits reach into our blurred past and present

By Gilbert A. Bouchard

As we walk through the Fine Arts Building Gallery, manager Blair Brennan lets me in on a secret. When hosting final presentation shows for students wrapping up their MFA studies, the gallery can't lose.

If the shows are similar, visitors to the two-storey exhibition hall are free to explore how two different artists interpret the same theme.

If the shows are different, viewers can contrast two interplays of craft and content produced by a duo of artists with relatively identical educational backgrounds, emerging simultaneously from the institutional crucible.

Then you have paired shows such as the one currently at the FAB Gallery that defy simple assessment and tantalize viewers with a subtle mingling of contrasting tropes and similar intellectual themes. The result is a push-pull virtual debate about the delicate mechanism by which we go about constructing pragmatic day-to-day realities.

Start with MFA Printmaking candidate Rebecca Beardmore's *Whisper* on the gallery's main floor.

Beardmore addresses the tricky idea of context, in particular how we endlessly and seamlessly shift between the literal, the figurative and the physical as we go about all aspects of daily life.

Her tact is to push the concept to its extreme, creating large "digitally emblazoned" pieces that juxtapose tightly packed rows of text, blurred, barely recognizable figures and physical

media that obscure more than they communicate. The final pieces are fascinating in that they present an aesthetically pleasing artistic whole, yet frustrate any attempt the viewer may have to "read" any one layer.

"The idea that any single layer cannot be relied upon for total coherency highlights the uneasy balance that exists between experience and understanding," she writes in her artistic statement. This tension between experience and understanding is all that more relevant in a culture flooded by a stream of mass media images that "ask little from us in regards to the deciphering of content."

Meanwhile on the second floor, Gareth Langley also explores the problems of cultural context and meaning in her show *Relics Retained*. Langley explores the significance we pack onto objects – "memories inspired by a catalyst."

The 25-year-old artist creates a series of surreal two-dimensional shadow boxes on which she prints strange little "interior landscapes" and depictions of murky little sea creatures. The intent is to underline how collected and saved objects are repositories of memories (in effect miniature "memory landscapes") and how these objects also refer back to the referential context they were plucked from.

Originally from Halifax and "very much a product of that culture" Langley's pieces underline the specificity of the ocean landscape and how one reacts to it, especially in hindsight. For Langley there's a complex mass of emotions associated with the ocean, "a sub-

lime feeling and a mix of attraction and fear, encompassing so many deaths, so much hidden under there." This complexity is neutralized when reduced to tiny objects taken from the waves for memory-based collections that become present only in the absence of their source.

In that way her project is very similar to her favourite author: fellow Nova Scotian Alistair MacLeod, author of *No Great Mischief*, a rollicking family-based memory novel stretching back to the Scottish highlands of 1779.

"I long for that culture, especially as I read MacLeod's book and contemplate the coming and going, the past and present of my home," she concludes. "In the end this work was inspired by my having left." ■

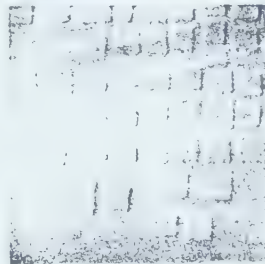


Photo: Jason B. Langley

The Fine Arts Building Gallery is hosting two exhibits by MFA printmaking students. Gareth Langley's *Relics retained* and Rebecca Beardmore's *Whisper* run until Sept. 23. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Tuesday to Friday and 2 – 5 p.m. Sunday (closed Monday, Saturday and statutory holidays). The FAB Gallery is located at the Fine Arts Building, 89 Ave. and 112 Street.

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MFA students shed a new light on prints

ART REVIEW

MFA Printmaking Exhibit

with Gareth Langley
and Rebecca Beardmore

FAB Gallery

11-23 September

James Elford

CIRCULATION MANAGER

When you mention printmaking, many people erroneously think of the machine-produced Robert Bateman-style reproductions. If you mention printmaking to anyone who has seen the MFA Final exhibitions at the FAB gallery, they will likely think of a craft that has become an art in itself, capable of fluent expression in the visual language.

Originating in Japan and China as a method of reproduction that would create multiple images from a single plate, printmaking allowed the production of images that would be otherwise inaccessible to the general public. The handprinting still practised by modern printmakers means that these multiple images are all original works of art, bringing the artists' vision to the masses.

Both Gareth Langley and Rebecca Beardmore provide beautiful examples of their work and, with their very different styles and areas of interest, show the variety and detail achievable in printmaking.

For Rebecca Beardmore, the ideas do not come from the medium itself, but are instead conceptually based concepts expressed in the printmaking form. Her work attempts to address "issues of perception within a society engulfed in digitally emblazoned images and fabricated realities." To achieve this, Rebecca has chosen to concentrate on subtlety, rather than the "established practice of visual assault."

The result forces the viewer to question how to deal with the material, as Rebecca pointed out. "Do they take the time to read the text? Do they pause to hear the whisper," or has patience been lost in today's world of immediate gratification? Her work was certainly thought provoking, although it helped to have Rebecca around to fully appreciate the concepts behind her pieces. Still, the questions her work raises are more relevant than ever and the Rebecca feels that the medium she chose to use was the right one for those questions. "Print media is the essence of mass culture," Rebecca explained "so it is the perfect medium to explore those kind of ideas."

Gareth Langley's work concentrates on the "memory of landscape," examining the past and how our memories have "a select area of focus within a hazy, ill-defined backdrop." This describes his work perfectly.

The images in her work are like small pieces of memory, each with



Chris Govias/The Gateway

Gareth Langley is not the kind of printmaker you'd expect.

its own personalized significance. "I make images which represent objects," Gareth explains. "Lost or discarded, washed up on the beach and then collected, boxed, and given new meaning and spiritual significance."

With lines that range from the sharp definitions of ink, to washed-out colours and soft edged charcoal-like forms, Gareth's work moves through the whole breadth of our perceptions of the past.

Some of these images seem very abstract, while others are more definite. Gareth explains that this "refers to the loss of detail that occurs in memory, as distance grows from the event."

From these very different approaches, the two MFA students have created a fascinating body of work. The hard work and skill with which these artists use their medium will certainly make you see printmaking in a new light.

Finding your voice

New human rights poster uses Braille as the 'voice'

By Geoff McMaster

After the 100th print run, Rebecca Beardmore was growing sick of the poster she'd designed for the U of A's Office of Human Rights.

"I had so many setbacks. I hated it by the time I finished it. After doing it over and over and over, you get tired of seeing it," says the master's student in printmaking.

But now that her creation is out of her studio and on display around campus for everyone to see, gratification is finally taking hold, she says. And the human rights office couldn't be happier with the poster, called "Finding Your Voice."

We've been tremendously blessed this year with this particular artist and particular work," says Janet Smith, director. "It's one of those pieces that gives you things to look at and interact with."

The image depicts a woman looking into a mirror with a hand wiping away petroleum jelly from the reflection of the woman's face. According to the artist, it is deliberately unclear whether the wiping is a clearing or obscuring of the facial features, "highlighting the existing limits to societal discourse faced by certain marginalized groups."

The poster is also covered in a Braille description of the woman's face, the language serving as a metaphor for the silenced voice of all minorities as well

as for the experience of seeing through touching.

"The Braille is just a tremendous, innovative, wonderful way to bring across the theme," says Smith.

"I've always liked Braille because it has a nice graphic element to it," says Beardmore. "It implies information without actually being information to most people and has a tactile quality."

The human rights office commissions a poster every year to fit a chosen theme, occasionally drawing student talent from various departments on campus. This year a few inquiries turned up

Beardmore's name, who is focusing her master's thesis on the loss of identity through mass communication. She was more than happy to take on the challenge.

"I'd been playing with these images—the hand wiping out the face or identity—long before they approached me, but I didn't know what to do with it...These images were almost too blatant for my work," says Beardmore.

Only 100 prints were produced, signed and numbered.

They are available from the

human rights office for a nominal fee of \$10 to cover reproduction costs. Smith says it's vital to keep the cost down so the prints stay within the student budget.

"It's part of our mandate to get people thinking about human rights issues," she says. ■



Beardmore: after the 100th print, gratification is taking hold

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Poster draws overseas attention

U of A displays braille embossed prints behind glass

ALLAN CHAMBERS
Journal Staff Writer
EDMONTON

The University of Alberta human-resources department has a new braille poster, but has put it behind glass, where it can't be read by the blind.

The story of the poster was reported recently by the esteemed British magazine *New Scientist*.

"Unfortunately, no one knows what it says because it has been put inside a display case with a glass front," the magazine noted in its feedback section, a regular feature about life's ironies and tidbits from around the world.

In this week's edition of *New Scientist*, Patricia Finney of Truro, county Cornwall, England, wrote in to say that the U of A isn't alone. The Truro Leisure Centre has signs directing people to the showers and exits in letters and in braille.

"The only trouble is, the dots are flush with the plastic and so can't be felt at all," she wrote.

But before anyone calls the U of A's human-rights office, it would be a good idea to, well, call the human-rights office, which is responsible for the posters that are indeed in braille and in 25 display cases around the campus.

Things are not as they might appear to some, said office director Janet Smith. The striking poster, entitled *Finding your voice*,



GREG SOUTHAM, THE JOURNAL
New Scientist magazine pokes a bit of fun at U of A for displaying braille posters, which promote equal treatment, behind glass.

is one of several on human-rights themes commissioned by the office in recent years. The limited-edition posters (about 100 were printed) are kept behind glass to protect them. Some are offered for sale at \$10 each, Smith said.

The latest print is by fine arts student Rebecca Beardmore. It is intended, according to an accompanying explanation, to highlight "the feeling of exclusion faced by certain sectors of society," notwithstanding the rapid advances in communications technology.

The writings in braille are a

lengthy description of images conveyed in the print. "There is a sharp crease on the left eyebrow just above the bridge of the nose," it begins. "Perhaps it's really the right eyebrow depending on how you look at it."

Smith said it's always possible to leap to conclusions.

"If you take a single view of something without putting it in context, in its total environment, yes, it's a braille piece behind glass."

But she noted the braille, written by the artist in co-operation with experts in technical repre-

sentation and braille, isn't a description of services offered or rights protected. "It's actually the artist's description of the artwork."

She said her office has been praised for commissioning a poster that blind people can buy and read.

Also, she said, one of the few remaining copies of the poster was sold recently for about \$200 in a silent auction by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The moral of the story? Beauty isn't the only thing that exists in the eye of the beholder.

NEWS

Thursday, 1 March, 2001

Braille print by U of A artist raises ire in international publication

"BRAILLE" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

That in turn prompted an article in the *Edmonton Journal*.

Janet Smith, Director of the Human Rights Office, says she is disappointed in the coverage, which she said equates the artistic print with a directional Braille sign, like those on the buttons of elevators.

"In an elevator, the Braille numbers are done in steel," she said. "That's very different from an individual print produced by an artist."

Smith said that the prints are behind glass because of the passing of the Employment Equity Plan in the mid-'90s that requires that the Office of Human Rights maintain the glassed-in bulletin boards on campus.

"It would be okay if it was going to be touched by just one or two students in their own home, but on a campus with several thousand students and staff, we would have had posters destroyed."

Every year, one piece of art is selected to be displayed in the cases, and this year the hand-printed limited edition by Beardmore was chosen. The print was also the centerpiece of a Canadian National Institute of the Blind fundraising silent auction, at which the piece raised two hundred dollars for the charity.

"I appreciate the on-the-face-of-it humour," said Smith. "I just feel for the artist who put so much work into it."

But Beardmore says she is "chuffed" with the international recognition, even though she feels the publications missed the point.

But she said she "might write a letter to the editor of *New Scientist*."

Glassed-in Braille prints raise small controversy

Christie Tucker

News Editor

A print created to celebrate human rights has created some controversy because of the manner of its display.

The Braille words on the piece are inaccessible to the blind, as the print is kept inside a glass case in all 25 of its campus locations.

The print, which depicts a man reaching out towards the viewer, is by U of A Fine Arts Masters student Rebecca Beardmore. It is meant to leave a viewer with the same feeling of exclusion that the visually impaired experience.

It is titled "Finding Your Voice," and includes a Braille description of the artist looking in the mirror.

A recent issue of *New Scientist* magazine included a complaint in their feedback column that the print was indecipherable to the blind on campus.

PLEASE SEE "BRAILLE" ON PAGE 2



Rebecca Beardmore's print aims to evoke blindness for sighted people.

Jennifer Danilowich / THE GATEWAY

Damaged Goods Inventory Senior Printmaking Exhibit

FAB Gallery
runs until 28 March

Michael MacLean
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT STAFF

There are momentous goings-on over at the Department of Art and Design. Tonight there will be an opening reception held for the Senior Printmaking Exhibition. Set at the FAB Gallery, the exhibition will be open to the public until March 28.

After speaking with a number of people involved with the exhibition, the sheer scope of it left me in a state of awe—these are ambitious proceedings we're talking about here. The exhibition will feature up to three pieces each from members of the undergraduate senior printmaking class, and will also include an installation by 1st year MFA student, Rebecca Beardmore.

Lyndal Osborne, instructor of the program, is the sort of person who made me want to quit my job, drop my English degree, and immerse myself entirely in printmaking endeavors. She provided me with a little background information on the printmaking program.

"At the beginning of this class, all photo-mechanical processes in the various media were demonstrated. The students were able to compare the qualities of lithography, screen print and etching to examine for themselves how each process would be useful as a medium of creative expression for themselves."

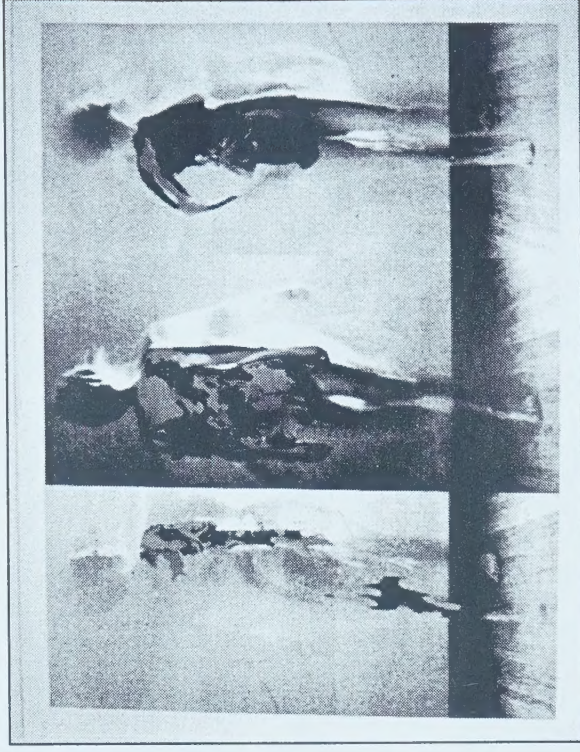
In a sense, the candidates have spent years becoming acquainted with the various methodologies and techniques of printmaking. For the senior undergrads, this will have been a year of great challenge, as they were

encouraged to put all previous years of work to the test and begin defining their own creative "space"—the *Damaged Goods Inventory* component of the exhibition represents a year of developing highly personalized responses and solutions to self-instigated paths of artistic inquiry.

Who is the typical candidate for a senior printmaking class? There is simply *no* typical candidate. Osborne pointed out that members of the class ranged in age from twenty- to thirty-something, and hailed from a variety of backgrounds. Some had been lab technicians, others had been involved in medicine, and still others had been self-employed (as a caterer, in one instance). She commented that in this particular group, at least half of the students seemed inclined towards pursuing futures as professional artists.

Kim Sala chose to appropriate photographic images for her purposes this year (with a little nudging from Lyndal), and found the experience tremendously valuable to her exploration of the impact of media images in everyday life. In Clara Kim's work, she showed an attempt to reinforce the physical—to reintroduce organic qualities—to what can become an overwhelmingly technical and esoteric process. To this end, some of her "texturally motivated" applications contributed towards some convincing results. Clara professes to draw from a Buddhist sensibility, and when asked for a quote she enigmatically offered, "Truth is yet to be found."

Tim Lee combines photo-etching, silk screening and relief techniques as he toys with some of our predisposition towards visually "receiving" images. In a game of "presenting and concealing," Tim's manipulations of the video image can be quite tricky—in some cases, the viewer "receives" more from the shadows, or from the sugges-



Kim Sala's piece, Cut [It] Out, 1999, is a waterless lithograph, now showing on the main level of the FAB Gallery. The Senior Printmaking Exhibition, Damaged Goods Inventory, will be on display until March 28.

Chul-Ahn Jeong / THE GATEWAY

tion of image, than from the image itself.

First year MFA student Rebecca Beardmore describes how, for the past 3 years, she has "addressed the concerns of communication technology within a society caught up in its increasing momentum." She goes on to say, "I am both overwhelmed and cynical of the aesthetic and emotional potential of this new tool. There is at once this sense of personal empowerment and complete loss of self." In one installation, the viewer must peer through a huge pane of glass covered in text. The text attempts to "define" a tree in highly impersonal and technical jargon—what you'd expect, basi-

cally, if you can imagine asking a computer program what a tree is. Behind the glass, Rebecca has attempted to represent the tree in other ways.

Having been graciously offered a small glimpse of the printmaking scene at the U of A, I must say it's all very impressive. Dear reader, you should really draw your own conclusions and see the exhibition yourself. Open to the public through to March 28, viewing hours vary. Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 5pm, and Sunday, 2pm to 5pm. Better yet, go to the opening reception tonight, March 18 (7-10pm), and speak with the artists themselves.

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